

REMARKS

The present application was filed on December 19, 2001 with claims 1-19. Claims 1, 15, 18 and 19 are the independent claims.

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the application in view of the foregoing amendments and the remarks to follow.

The Examiner has objected to the specification due to a number of informalities.

The Examiner has indicated that claims 3, 4, 8 and 9 contain allowable subject matter.

Claims 1, 2, 5-7, 10 and 12-19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,430,527 (hereinafter "Waters").

Claim 11 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Waters in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,636,445 (hereinafter "Ohshima").

Applicants have amended the specification to address the informalities noted by the Examiner.

Also, Applicants have amended independent claims 1, 15, 18 and 19, as well as the specification, to clarify that the multiple copies of the given data item are stored in respective ones of the designated minimum number of the memory banks. Support for this clarifying amendment can be found, for example, in the illustrative arrangement of FIG. 2 and the associated text at page 7, lines 6-14, of the specification. It is to be appreciated, however, that the claimed invention is not restricted to this particular illustrative arrangement.

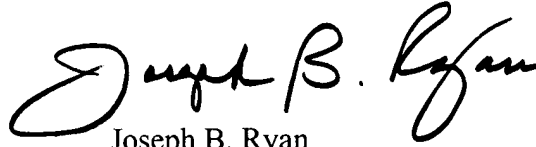
Dependent claim 3 has been rewritten in independent form, and is believed to be allowable in view of the indication of allowable subject matter.

Independent claims 1, 15, 18 and 19 have been amended to incorporate the limitations of dependent claim 8, now canceled. These independent claims are believed allowable in view of the indication of allowable subject matter.

Dependent claim 9 has been amended to depend directly from claim 1 rather than indirectly from claim 1 via claim 8.

In view of the above, Applicants believe that claims 1-7 and 9-19 are in condition for allowance, and respectfully request the withdrawal of the §102(b) and §103(a) rejections.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Joseph B. Ryan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Joseph" and last name "Ryan" clearly legible, and a middle initial "B." in between.

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Joseph B. Ryan
Attorney for Applicant(s)
Reg. No. 37,922
Ryan, Mason & Lewis, LLP
90 Forest Avenue
Locust Valley, NY 11560
(516) 759-7517